

Testimony in SUPPORT of:

SB 1017: An Act Concerning Election Administration.

HB 6578: An Act Concerning Participation in Electoral Process

SB 1014: An Act Concerning a Municipal Election Monitor for the 2021 Municipal Election and the 2022 State Election

Dear GAE Committee Co-Chairs Sen. Flexer and Rep. Fox, Vice Chairs Sen. Haskell and Rep. Thomas, and Ranking Members Sen. Sampson and Rep. Mastrofrancesco and Members of the GAE Committee,

My name is Paula Bacolini, I have lived in Glastonbury, CT for over 35 years. I am the founder and leader of Make Voting Easy-CT, a grassroots organization with nearly 1,000 members from 95 cities and towns across CT, who are devoted to making voting more convenient and accessible.

I am writing today in support of the these 3 bills:

SB 1017: An Act Concerning Election Administration.

I was so grateful to you and the CT General Assembly for making it possible to vote by absentee ballot in 2020, and to have the option of dropping my ballot in the secure Absentee Ballot Drop Box in front of my Town Hall, which I used for both the primary and the general election. As I am a senior citizen, this easy access was convenient and safe. Please support this for future elections to provide CT voters another secure option for voting and also please make it possible for voters to request absentee ballots with online applications. Over the past year, we have seen how the internet has helped to keep us all connected, and it is time for us to join the 21st century when it come to requesting an absentee ballot application.

HB 6578: An Act Concerning Participation in Electoral Process

Automatic Voter Registration is working well at the Dept. of Motor Vehicles. Please make this voter registration access available to all CT voters and codify it into law permanently, and expand this bill to include other state agencies. In addition, this bill will restore voting rights to people on parole.

I have written testimony in support of this legislation in the past, because once a person has been released on parole, it is reasonable to reinstate their voting status. This will enhance their self-esteem as citizens, and give them a chance to continue to function in a meaningful way in our society. 20 states already allow people on parole to vote, and the New York State Senate has recently voted to restore voting rights to people on parole. It is time to stop disenfranchising people on parole, and provide all of us with a more equitable society. Voting is a fundamental right and must be granted to citizens who have served their time without any other restrictions.

SB 1014: An Act Concerning a Municipal Election Monitor for the 2021 Municipal Election and the 2022 State Election

In the 2020 election, we saw how the CARES Act funding benefited Bridgeport by providing Election Monitoring, which insured election integrity and security. Please pass this legislation and give the election officials and voters in Bridgeport the support they need to rebuild trust in our election process.

For all these reasons, I urge you to vote YES and support these three important pieces of legislation: SB 1017, HB 6578 & SB 1014.

Thank you for your hard work for the people of CT. Please stay safe and well.

Respectfully,
Paula Bacolini
Glastonbury, CT
Founder and Leader
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Formerly Leader of the following organizations that are now also part of Make Voting Easy-CT:
Democracy Awakens CT - Voting Rights Team
Let People Vote Team
Glastonbury Huddle